(b) if so, whether Government propose to give the option to the States to decide the manner in which the prize money has to be spent by these States, depending on the appraisal of the specific problem in each State; and

(c) the steps taken to give further incentives to States, including Kerala in Family Welfare Programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) and (b) The existing guidelines issued to all the States/UTs provide that the States can utilise the award money according to their discretion within a period of three years for any vital aspect connected with the Family Welfare Programme.

(c) No fresh incentive schemes to States (including Kerala) under Family Welfare Programme are envisaged at present.

Use of Thorium for nuclear electric

1749. SHRI DALJA SENI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the thorium route provides the country with unlimited source of energy;

(b) what is the quantum of thorium India has in the monazite sands of Kerala coast;

(c) whether it is also a fact that nuclear electric capacity can be increased further by using thorium breeder reactors;

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to raise the nuclear electric capacity;

(e) whether it is also a fact that it is necessary to instal fact breeder reactors fuelled by appropriate mixtures of plutonuim and depleted uranium for continued supply of nuclear energy into the next century; and

(f) if so, what action Government have taken to instal more fast breeder reactors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The energy available from India's estimated thorium resources when used in breeder reactors has a potential to sustain an electric generating capacity of 500,000 MWe for about 500 years.

(b) The estimated amount of thorium in India is of the order of 3,60,000 tonnes. A major fraction of this contained in the coastal monazite sands in Kerala.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Conversion of thorium into uranium-233 is done in fast breeder reactors. This technology is developed at Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research, Kalpakkam and a fast breeder test reactor has been set up.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The fast breeder test reactor has been commissioned at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research in October 1985 to provide the necessary experience for Indian scientists and engineers in the design, construction and operation of liquid sodium cooled fast breeder reactors. A 500 MWe prototype fast breeder reactor is in the design stage and necessary technology development for this reactor has been taken up. This prototype reactor is planned to be constructed during the next decade.